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## SERMON IV.

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### SHOW ME THY GLORY.

"I beseech thee, show me thy glory."—EXODUS 33: 18.

It was a singular, an unparalleled discipline by which God educated the legislator of his people. A foundling, yet nursed by his own doting mother, a daughter of Levi, passionate—as every Jewish mother has been—to give the unfading tincture of national faith to the infant soul. Cradled in courts, yet as little a courtier as the wildest, fiercest anchoret. Profound in all the learning of Egypt, yet turning to the desert and the mountains for lessons fitted to separate himself and his people by a gulf that should be impassable from all the rites and doctrines of the Pharaohs. And the resulting character is unlike that of all other founders, commanders, and legislators. In the fervor of patriotism slaying the oppressor of his brethren with his own hand, yet chronicled for coming ages as the meekest of mankind. A law-giver in a wilderness; a victorious general at the head of myriads

of slaves; destined from his birth to conduct a great migration, yet not beginning his march till fourscore years old. Inspiring all around him by predictions of a land flowing with milk and honey, yet dying on its threshold. Of a truth, the training and the history of this great prophet of the law are without a resemblance in the annals of men. All was a preparation for one mighty period in the developments of Providence and religion; and all had reference to a better Canaan, a spiritual country, a rest which remaineth for the people of God. That inward principle which craves the invisible, which longs for God, which pierces through external things of time, which looks forth on the infinite, which we denominate *faith*, was the ruling power in this prince and sage and seer. The intense suffering of a life-time of martyrdom was upheld by the vision of something beyond. By this, when he emerged from a youth spent among those monuments which are still the wonder and the reproach of learned toil, he cast the crown on the earth, and "refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter." No; he was the son of a Hebrew woman, "a daughter of Levi." Knowing that God was to be found in the way of cross-bearing, he chose "rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." His eye looked down through the perspective of ages, and fastened on the great manifestation of God's glory, for which all his life and all his legislation and all his generalship were to be the prelude, and for which he embraced even poverty and vituperation, "esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt." At fourscore years of age, keeping the flock of Jethro, as an exile, among the dark solitudes and barren ravines and frowning cliffs of Arabia, under the awful shadow of "Horeb, the mount of God," he there inquires for God.

Providence has chosen its rugged scenes, where internal heats have thrown up deep formations, to be in harmony with the great heavings of the soul, in its fluctuations and agonies of profound thought and emotion. Thus the Baptist was in the desert; thus the Son of Man was led into the wilderness. Travelers still with painful steps climb to these Arabian fastnesses and solitudes; for time, which changes all things, works little change in these iron elevations. It is a cluster of mountains, with piles of granite rocks, cut into dark valleys and gorges. Horeb and Sinai are eminences of the same chain; holding in its hollows that great plain of Rahah, one square mile in area, in which the nation was encamped before God. Here the solitary shepherd is startled by a voice which addresses him from a flame of fire. Called by name, he would approach, but receives the caution: "Draw not nigh hither; put off the shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." He is beginning to learn something of that power for which he has been so long seeking; beginning to comprehend

the destiny of his life. "I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God." He receives his commission, and is brought still nearer, to hear the incommunicable name, I AM THAT I AM, or, more briefly, I AM, denoting self-existence, eternal, necessary existence; the Supreme; the Being of beings; JEHOVAH. At the burning bush, we may believe, was enkindled in Moses the desire to know God which is expressed in our text.

How solemn, how heart-subduing the discipline of succeeding events! His survey of the enslaved Hebrews, sinking under increasing burdens, is interrupted by renewed voices from above: "I am Jehovah—I have heard the groaning of the children of Israel—I have remembered my covenant." Then comes the conflict with the tyrant—the appeal to God—the river of blood—the invasion of multitudinous loathsome and abhorred creatures—pestilence on man and beast—tempests of thunder, hail, and fire—darkness that may be felt—the flight of a destroying angel, and the midnight cry over the first-born; each plague alternating with the relentings and the hardenings of a doomed king. At length the triumphant breaking forth of hundreds of thousands, in hot haste, pressed by pursuing columns, hemmed in by walls of nature, passing through an arm of the sea, and on their way in a march of forty years through a "waste howling wilderness." If outward circumstances can mould a human character to awful heroism and deep contemplation, we surely have them here.

That which assured the faith of Moses, no doubt was the presence of that God whom he sought. Carrying with him the bones of Joseph, in token of faith that they should regain the place of his sepulchre, "he endured as seeing Him who is invisible." Their march was not without visible guidance. "The Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night; he took not away the pillar of the cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night from before the people." The smitten rock and the manna attested the same presence. When God gives victory, he builds an altar, calling it *Jehovah Nissi*, "the Lord my banner."

Amidst those mountains of which we have spoken, Moses is brought yet more near to the secret place of God's presence. Here, shut out from the great Gentile world, the chosen people are in a gloomy but divine sanctuary. All is preparation for an event nothing less than the coming down of Jehovah, in the sight of all, upon Mount Sinai. There are thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; and the smoke thereof ascends as the smoke of a furnace, and the voice of the trumpet waxes louder and louder,

and amidst an earthquake the Lord descends on the summit, and calls Moses to this fearful height. Here he receives the law of commandments; here God speaks to Moses "face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend." Here is some sight of God's glory; but there is more to be desired, and more to be enjoyed. It is at a later day that we read: "And Moses went up into the mount, and a cloud covered the mount. And the glory of the Lord abode upon Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days; and the seventh day he called Moses out of the midst of the cloud. And the sight of the glory of the Lord was like devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel. And Moses was in the mount forty days and forty nights." It may unquestionably be said, that God did here show him his glory; and yet there was more in reserve.

The heart of this holy man is presently rent by the idolatry of Aaron and the people; and in his burning indignation he breaks the tables of stone. Thus do exaltations and humblings checker the field of spiritual life. None but those who have learned to live for others; who have involved their happiness in the happiness of others; who have set God's honor above all, can properly sympathize with the mighty griefs which break forth in such a prayer as this; so full of self-devotion, disappointed hope, and adoring sorrow: "Oh! this people have sinned a great sin, and have made themselves gods of gold. Yet now (if thou wilt) forgive their sin! and if *not*—blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written!" Where can heathen antiquity show a semblance of such patriotism and such love! Her heroes are but babes compared with him, who here stands forth a living type of that great Mediator and Intercessor whom Moses beheld in the distance of ages, and who not merely invited, but underwent the stroke of justice which was due to his people.

These were preparations for nearer communion with heaven, in that temporary tabernacle which was without the camp. "All the people stood, every man at his tent-door, and looked after Moses, until he was gone into the tabernacle. And it came to pass, as Moses entered into the tabernacle, the cloudy pillar descended, and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and the Lord talked with Moses. And all the people saw the cloudy pillar stand at the tabernacle-door, and all the people rose up and worshiped, every man at his tent-door. And the Lord spake unto Moses, face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend." This was honor not bestowed on other men, so far as we read. And it is expressly said, (Deut. 34 : 10 :) "There arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face." It was a special and electing condescension, centering upon his individual person, as Jehovah had said: "I know thee by name, and thou hast also found grace in my sight." But Moses would



press still nearer. He felt himself inaugurated as the leader of that host; he heard God's promise: "My presence shall go up with thee, and I will give the rest." He was wrapt and encircled in the pillar of light and the pavilion of deity, till the very aspect of his countenance was transfigured; yet as God's gifts are from grace to grace, and from glory to glory, and as he who beholds most, would fain behold more, and he who drinks most deeply is most athirst, it is at this very moment of transcendent vision that he cries, *I beseech thee, show me thy glory!*

You would not have been invited, my brethren, to so long an array of circumstances, if each of these had not seemed necessary to bring our minds to the posture for duly measuring the magnitude of the request. It is the cry—not of an infant—not of a Gentile—not of a novice—not of a soul in darkness or comparative ignorance—but of one who had known peculiar revelations—who had been embosomed in the intimacy of divine communion—who was even now on an unapproachable height of adoring transport. Yet he exclaims, *I beseech thee, show me thy glory!* If there is a moment of life in which he will give utterance to the chiefest of wishes, and in which the ruling passion will burst into language, it is surely this; when summoned by God—when listening to words of favor—when raised to touch the scepter of majesty. Let us, therefore, mark well what he asks. He might have sought exemption from toils and speedy repose; he might have asked wide dominion, and kingly triumph; he might have asked immediate passage into Canaan, or immediate deliverance from the ills of earth; but no—"I beseech thee, show me thy GLORY." He will have nothing but God, yea, *having* him, he will have more of God. Looking a little into that heaven of light, he will look more deeply. And this is true, not of Moses only, but of all who ever tasted that the Lord is gracious. It was not rashness, it was not foolhardy pride; it was a soul thirsting for God—"for the living God"—for that infinite good which the ungodly disbelieve; and thirsting more intensely for what he had tasted. Such is the law of the *kingdom*: "To him that hath shall be given, and he shall have more abundantly." It is the law of *grace*: "The path of the just is as the shining light," glowing and glowing, till it reach its burning noon. It is the law of *glory*: "They go from strength to strength; every one of them in Zion appeareth before God."

There is a sense in which the infinite Majesty can not be seen: it was not the sense of the prophet's request. The essence of God is eternally secret. His depths are unfathomable. His fires are consuming. Yet we are made for God, and in his image; and eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, what God hath prepared for them that love him. The partial accomplishment of the desire (in the context) explains its intent. The servant of God desired to *see him*. He had form-

erly asked his *name*, on this very Horeb, which darkly towers above the camp : he would more fully apprehend his *nature*. The *glory* of God is the *character* of God. The *glory* of God is *God in manifestation* ; it is the *outshining* of God ; the radiance from infinite and inscrutable darkness. He would *know God* ; not merely *that* he is ; which contents many ; but *what* he is. Show me thy *glory*, that is, show me thine *attributes*. "I have been led by thee, in wonderful events and demonstrations of power and judgment, such as no man ever saw ; *now*, in this favored hour, when the world is shut out, let the awful secret break forth into disclosure. Oh ! unvail thy face—hide no longer thy perfections—show me thy *glory* !"

Do you remember, my brethren, that night of wrestling prayer at Peniel, where the great ancestor of the nation prevailed with God, till the divine angel cried, "Let me go, for the day breaketh !" On that signal occasion *Jacob*, now named *ISRAEL*, thus addressed his God : "Tell me, I pray thee, thy *name*. And He said, Wherefore is it that thou askest after my name ? and He blessed him there." The blessing of Moses was greater ; his desire was perhaps more urgent. The time was come for a great manifestation. There is a notable diversity in the methods of God's communications, even to his most favored servants. It is usually in solitude. Call to mind the sublime terrors of that evening (Gen. 15) when Jehovah foreshowed to the father of the faithful this very deliverance of his progeny which he is now accomplishing by the hand of Moses. It is the hour of sacrifice. "And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram, and lo ! a horror of great darkness fell upon him. And God said, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall be afflicted four hundred years ; and that nation I will judge." Call to mind what befell Elijah, the Tishbite, in this very mountain. (1 Kings 19 : 8.) He is lodging in a cave in "Horeb, the mount of God." He is called forth upon the mount. "And behold the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord ; but the Lord was not in the wind ; and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake ; and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire ; and after the fire a still small voice. And it was so when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle and went and stood in the entering in of the cave." There is something awful in every approach of the Most High to an earthly worm ; and the presence would be consuming but for the gentle supports of grace. Yet this presence and these communications are what make the believer's heaven. What above all things he desires, is *God*. The best of creatures, yea, all creatures, in their utmost sum, lead him up to God. Whatever is beautiful or sublime or good in

creation, is but a drop from that fountain, a beam from that sun ; existing in the Great Supreme, eminently, infinitely, and eternally. God is not the sum of mind and matter, as the pantheist impiously dreams ; he is personally and immutably distinct from all that he has made. Yet whatever is great or good, or tending to happiness in the creature, is the shadow : of which the reality is on high. God is, therefore, the true portion ; and we should bless and praise him with humble, unutterable thanks, that he has chosen to frame a creature with capacity for so great a joy. He who hath God hath all things. He is the ultimate rest and centre towards which the rational creature tends ; and torn from which it is in darkness, despair, and death. To see God, in any good degree, is to see infinite beauty in its source and consummation : primeval excellence, of which all that transports us here, in the most rapt ecstasy of our most blissful moment in life, is but a broken reflection, being infinitely less like God than the sparkle of the morning dew-drop is like the glorious sun of heaven. All that Moses, all that Elijah, all that Isaiah saw, is but a gleam of day let into the chink of "the soul's dark cottage : " yet there is nothing so bright on earth.

The most wonderful thought of all is, that in our fallen state there should be any communication between heaven and earth ; that God should be in any degree apprehended by man. It is our chief privilege. There *is* a revelation of the Infinite Good. The medium is various ; and not now to be largely discussed ; as by creation—by conscience—by prophecy—by miracle—by the Word—by the Spirit—by the Lord Jesus Christ. Yet by whatever means it is the same satisfying portion, the Chief Good—it is God. And when the beauty of his presence shines forth, it is the *glory of God*. The way in which the soul enjoys this infinite good is in the first instance *by knowledge*. In conformity with our intellectual nature, which is itself a part of the divine image, we receive God by knowing him. He comes into our reason. As the flower expands its colored petals to receive the light, so the reason opens to the knowledge of God. This knowledge is not merely a means to an end. Knowledge in general has a glory beyond any thing instrumental. We were *made* that we might know. But above all, the knowledge of God is a substantive, ultimate good : carrying with it in its very nature, an indescribable self-satisfaction. It is inseparably joined, in gracious souls, with the enjoyment of God as a portion ; the other powers of the soul being subdued into a holy conformity, and the sanctified affections resting in that which is revealed. Hence the sight of God is heaven. That is a low and ignoble view of the happiness of a Christian, which makes it consist in any thing confined to self, or to the pardon and reward of self. The more God is beheld, the more are all selfish and

individual regards absorbed and utterly drowned in the mighty object—the *glory of the Lord*.

Even though enveloped in the cloud of light, Moses was intense in his desire to possess more of God: "I beseech thee, show me thy glory!" These are words of entreaty—of irrepressible desire. True grace still produces the same aspirations. Faith still presses towards the inner sanctuary. The needle, which has been divinely touched, still trembles towards the pole, and never rests but in its meridian. No one trait of our common Christianity is more universal than the desire to know more of God. It is increased with every communication, and is often strongest when the heart is breaking upon a dying-bed. As men differ in their mental structure, capacity, and training, so this desire varies, but it is in all. If the Christian taxes his powers in contemplation, it is that he may know more of God. If he kneels long with upturned soul at the throne of grace, it is to know more of God. If he meditates day and night in the law, it is to know more of God. If he longs for heaven, it is that he may there know more of God. It is the language, not so much of Moses as of the Church, *I beseech thee, show me thy glory!*

Nor did God despise his request, nor turn away his prayer from him, as we shall presently see. Though flesh and blood could not endure a direct sight; though the full-orbed splendor would be death; yet God has merciful methods of revelation. "And he said, I will make all my *goodness* pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of Jehovah before thee." "Thou canst not see my face, for there shall no man see me and live. And the Lord said, Behold there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock. And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by." Blessed words! of glorious condescension and fatherly promise! How he subdues and mitigates his insufferable fires, and hangs a cloud over his dazzling throne, while with his own hand he makes a covert and a hiding-place for the shrinking but longing and aspiring creature, that even when it can not sustain the vision of his face, it may catch a glimpse of the retiring divinity and hear the music of that greatest, gentlest, loveliest name!

It was on the next morning that the Lord descended in the cloud, and "stood with him there," on the neighboring summit of Sinai, and proclaimed the name of Jehovah. And oh! remark, beloved brethren, how, in the music that issues even from that penal and judicial mountain, the attributes of goodness, grace, and compassion strike the leading chord and claim the precedence, and how terror is but a transient discord resolved into the harmonious whole: "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping

mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation." Thus did he hear the glorious name; thus did God make all his goodness "pass before him." Can we believe it to have been a mere hearing of the ear? Can we believe it to have been a mere apprehension of the intellect? After so august a preparative, and so importunate a prayer, it could be nothing less than an efficacious manifestation to the *experience*, such knowledge as brings fruition to the soul, an antepast of future joy.

That which more nearly concerns us, is, that what Moses prayed for and enjoyed, is prayed for and enjoyed by all the children of God in their measure. Without these external symbols they truly see that glory, and see it more and more. By God's blessing on the exertions of the mind, occupying itself about God; by the effusion of the Holy Ghost revealing the things of God; by light shed down on the Scriptures; by the high communion of devotional acts, in public and private ordinances; and above all, by the great Revealer, the Lord Jesus Christ—infinite grace continues to manifest this glory.

Brethren, I would not take fancy for revelation; but I can never be made to believe that Moses knew nothing of Christ. Abram saw His day, and rejoiced; yet Abram's oracle was less distinct than that of his descendant. This Moses, who was forty days and nights with God—who was embosomed in his cloudy mansion—who beheld the pattern of every typical vessel on the mount—who spake to God face to face—who, from the cleft of the rock, beheld "all his goodness"—who predicted the great prophet Messiah—who cried, "*Show me thy glory*"—how is it to be imagined that he had no glimpse of the antitype—Him of whom he and all the prophets did write—Him whom every altar and every bleeding victim betokened—Him who is in every deed the manifestative glory of Jehovah? "*Show me thy glory*," sounds in Gospel ears like, "*Show me thy CHRIST*." "The law was given by Moses; but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Yes; Moses also saw his day, and rejoiced; and longed for the vision of Him, in whom "dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." The exodus from Egypt was pledge of another greater exodus. Methinks I behold a fulfillment of his yearning petition fifteen centuries later, when, on another mountain, as the Son of Man prayed, "the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistering; and, behold! there talked with him two men, who were Moses and Elijah; who appeared in glory, and spake of His *exodus* which he should accomplish at Jerusalem." Yes; Moses has beheld that glory in a better world. For when a cloud received the Lord at his ascension, and while the disciples looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, "be-



hold, two *men* stood by them in white apparel." I assert not that these men were Moses and Elias; but let us not doubt that Moses welcomed his returning Lord to that sanctuary where they "sing the song of Moses and the Lamb." For, to Moses, and to all saints, the hour of death is the hour of revelation, when God shows them his glory. What though the venerable hero and prophet stopped short of the earthly Canaan? What though God said to him, "I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither." The passage was brief from Pisgah to heaven; and in that sweet moment, when God's finger closed his eyes, and when (according to the beautiful dream of the rabbins) God's lips *kissed away* his dissolving soul, he opened his spiritual vision on the consummation of his prayer, "*I beseech thee, show me thy glory.*" It is this beatific vision which is the charm of Paradise. A greater than Moses prayed, not for himself, but us: "Father, I will that they whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory." Of the clearness and plenitude of that vision, it is written: "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. For now I see through a glass," in an enigma, "but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know, even as also I am known." He who prays, "show me thy glory," prays for death and heaven. In *that* world vision will be possession. Here I gladly borrow the words of a Puritan divine: "How unspeakably pleasant, to a holy soul, will such a perpetual acknowledgment of God be! when the perpetuation of its being shall be nothing else than a perpetuation of this acknowledgment; when every renewed aspiration, every motion, every pulse of the glorified soul shall be but a repetition of it; when it shall find itself, in the eternity of life, that everlasting state of life which it now possesses, to be nothing else than an everlasting testimony that *God is God*. 'He is so; for I am, I live, I have the power to love him; none of which could otherwise be.' When, among the innumerable myriads of the heavenly host, this shall be the mutual alternate testimony of each to all the rest throughout eternity—will not this be bliss? When each shall feel continually, the fresh illapses and incomes of God, the power and sweetness of divine influences, the enlivening vigor of that vital breath, and find in themselves that they live and are sustained; and are yet as secure, touching the continuance of this state of life, as if every one were a god to himself; and did each one possess an entire godhead!"

But we must come down from the lofty plain of Horeb, to the ordinary path of life. Yet let our prayer be, "I beseech thee, show me thy glory!" Let us, like Enoch, *walk with God*. "The proper study of mankind, is"—God. Be this the great aspiration of our life; sanctifying our common walks, and hover-



ing over our daily duties as the cloudy, fiery column over the camp of Israel. Alas for those who have no heart, no longing, no taste for this amazing good! "God is not in all their thoughts." Their eyes are holden; for the pure in heart shall see God. How great must be the change within, before you can be fit for that heaven, of which it is the chief glory that there God is seen! Such thoughts should awaken earnest consideration. What! can he be in a right or in a safe state, who turns away with distaste from the greatest, best, and holiest of all conceivable objects! Oh! bewail that carnal mind which discerneth not the things of the Spirit of God! Repent of that madness, in which you seek happiness every where but at its source! "Acquaint now thyself with God, and be at peace; thereby good shall come unto thee." For, if ye believe, ye shall see the glory of God.

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## SERMON V.

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BY THE REV. WILLIAM R. WILLIAMS, D.D.,

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### THE SCRIPTURES BETTER THAN WEALTH.\*

"For the law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver."  
PSALM 119: 72.

BUT two weeks have passed since our country was brimful of exultation. Our land rejoiced over its possession of liberty, and over the perils, sacrifices, and successes of our fathers in asserting it. From the Atlantic to the Pacific, and far over the seas and in the strange lands and islands, whither our citizens have wandered and where they have met, there have been demonstrations, quiet or vociferous, in larger gatherings or in smaller bands—but demonstrations which together were of immense costliness, to express the national estimate of Independence and Freedom. To some, this liberty seems opposed to *law*. To them liberty is the privilege of doing all that we may like, whether this be good or bad. Liberty in their vocabulary is license. But a little reflection shows that without law there can be no real liberty. Unless there be some settled standard of common right, some bulwark in statute and tribunal for the privileges of the feeble and the few against the incursions of the many and the mighty, some safeguard for inexperience and weakness, against the invasions of fraud and the encroachments of rapacity, there would be for the masses no true, practical freedom. Every man would hold his property and his home, and his life even, but by the tenure of the strong arm

\* Preached soon after the Fourth of July, 1857.

and the open eye, by bludgeon and sword and revolver. He would be liable, if no edicts, judges, and prisons restrained the excesses of surrounding selfishness, at any moment to be robbed, maimed, caged and massacred by unscrupulous and vigorous neighbors. Even, for a man himself, the most terrible of all despotisms is to be given up to his own idle and ungovernable desires;—to have no settled principles, and to heed no law, “fearing not God, neither regarding man.” True liberty is the right of doing right, in the use of our own, as secured to us by the majesty of law, and hedged round against the incursions of lawlessness. The privilege of doing wrong—or freedom abused, is license—quite another thing than liberty. The freedom of seraphim is not the license of using angelic strength for purposes of caprice and tyranny and self-pleasing. It is the law of God’s love in their hearts, and the law of God’s care around about their paths—making them serene, ready, unembarrassed and fearless in doing right and in enjoying right. Law consolidates, law bounds and limits, law sustains and upholds liberty. The highest freedom is Heaven’s freedom: and that is not lawless. It is law-abiding and law-loving as well as law-guarded.

Our text speaks of “LAW,” which as we have just seen is necessary to the real enjoyment of liberty—a boon to us nationally and justly so dear. The Psalmist describes the unerring and perfect law—that which issues from God’s lips and is administered by God’s arm throughout his universal dominion. In his people’s heart it becomes, as the New Testament calls it, a law of liberty and a law of love. Our text says of this law that it is better than wealth. Now, for few things have men generally a keener relish or a higher estimate than for property or riches. “Money,” says the wise man, “answereth all things.” It is capable of so many uses: it secures to the resident and the traveler so many advantages: it wields such influence, not only on the exchange, but throughout society, and its pursuit excites and sustains such gigantic energy of effort, that as to its worth men seem little to need having it urged upon their attention. About what would men generally feel that an acquaintance was more to be congratulated than on his entering, by a happy turn of his business, or by inheritance, or by some fruitful invention, on the possession, easily and speedily, of a vast fortune? To say that you had become the owner, in the last week, of “thousands of gold and silver” would make you the object at once of general remark, and secure from those who knew you very eager gratulations. Introductions would flow in upon you; and your utterances would be invested with new weight. The clink of coin would lend a golden echo to the lightest words that you might drop, though in themselves they might else be inconsiderate, and it may be, inconsiderable—the result of little reflection on your own part, and as little worthy of recollection on the part of others.

The Psalmist—ay, more than David—the Psalmist's God—the Infallible and the True—the Spirit that shaped and surveys all creation, here declares that there is that, which is near us and which is within your reach and mine this day—which is better than gold mines, than banks, and than imperial treasures. Now God never exaggerates : Scripture never talks at random, or deals in hyperbole, and never daubs in color upon the canvas for the mere sake of glaring effect. The Maker, Owner, and Judge of the world knows the true rate and intrinsic value of all the objects, lesser or greater, throughout his dominions. And here is his declaration, by his own Spirit. His inspiration was guiding the intellect, lips, and pen of his servant the Psalmist.

Let us then, suspending as the Sabbath does, the pursuit of worldly gain, suspend also our idolatrous and more exclusive meditations upon it, and think upon something better, as David judged, than gain ; and better, too, as we shall one day esteem it, than all the riches of all the Rothschilds. Could all the crowns of earthly kings, with all their jewels, be laid in the corner of your pew, and you be bidden to take them home as your own, upon your rising to quit the sanctuary, you would not be as rich as the right use of this, the law of the Lord, would make you.

With prayer for the help of God's own Spirit to feel and to own the force of the lessons, let us observe :

I. The description of God's word : "The law of thy mouth."

II. Its superiority to what men ordinarily so highly esteem : "Is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver."

I. It is not the law, then, of God's HAND merely. It is not his character dimly traceable in his works that he has made, from the clover growing at your feet to the planets blazing over your head. A man by walking over the plantations of Mount Vernon in the lifetime of its illustrious occupant, might form some idea of Washington's character as a farmer from the state of his fields, fences, and farm-buildings. By visiting his encampments, and studying a map of his campaigns, he might judge Washington as a soldier. But a few hours' conversation with the hero and statesman himself would give a much better idea of his whole general character and principles. An accurate study of Washington's dispatches, letters, and presidential addresses, would be of the same kind of aid : only, as being more full and leisurely, its results would be yet more advantageous. His conversations and his writings would be the law of Washington's mouth ; his utterances, verbally, of what he was, and what he meant to do, and what he had vainly wished. The study of his home and estate would be the law of Washington's hand, and would intimate but a small portion of his character, merits, and plans.

Now some in our day are fond of praising God's natural and material creation. They extol geology, and astronomy, and math-

ematics, and all physical science; and they say that these works and laws of His, give us all the evidence as to God's nature, that we need or that we ought ever to hope for. They would limit Jehovah to dumb and tongue-tied signs. Blessed be God, he has done much more, and done far better for us. He has talked to prophets and apostles. We have the opening of Jehovah's mouth, and in these pages we have the record of it.

It is called "the law," we suppose, with the intention not to confine it to the Old Testament dispensation by any means, though that is very often called the law distinctively. The Gospel, too, in the sense of our text, is the law of God's mouth as much as any statute or psalm in the Old Testament. His law—the Gospel—is by his own Son the Lord Jesus Christ, the express image of the Father's person, (Heb. 1: 1,) "spoken unto us." Unto you and me—has Jehovah spoken. Seeing him, men saw the Father; and when on the Mount of Beatitudes he opened his lips and taught the people, it was as if the seven thunders of the Apocalypse rolled down from Jehovah's opened heaven; it was as authoritative, solemn, and divine, as had been the trumpets of Sinai, and as will be the edicts of the great white throne. Some speak of that short phrase, "He opened his mouth," in Christ's gospels, as if it were mere tautology. The remark on their part to us seems mere thoughtlessness. To us it represents the Saviour and the Sovereign uttering edicts and emitting revelations. He spake as one having authority, said the people. But all revelation, whether patriarchal, Levitical, or Christian, is the law of God's mouth, as presenting what is fixed and assured, the established truth; and as recording our duty and settling beyond cavil and dispute our true interests and obligations. It is not mere peradventure, a probable inference, a likelihood, a hope, but a fixed principle. It is the law of his mouth.

The utterances of men's mouths are not always a safe augury as to the feelings of their hearts. Speech may but disguise intention with them. But in the true and faithful God it is not so. The mouth is the outlet of the heart of God. And especially in the Gospel does He who lay in the Father's bosom, whose place was near the heart of the God of love, reveal that loving parental heart. The only-begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father hath declared him. Grace came by Jesus Christ. There and then the lowest deeps of God's pitying heart ran over and rolled down upon us. So loved he the world as to give his own Son, not merely as the Redeemer, but also as the Revealer; and not only as the Sacrifice and the Priest, but as well also to be the Prophet and Teacher of his people.

The word of God, both by Moses, and by David, and by Paul, and by Jesus Christ, is, then, to be regarded as here included. All Scripture is shut up in this designation used by our text.

II. Now think of its excellence. Some of you, perhaps, who do

not value an ordinary Bible very much, might yet, if art produced a copy of the volume written on gold plates, each chapter commencing with diamond capitals, and every verse numbered with pearls and rubies, become most eager to see, and deem yourselves happy might you but own so gorgeous a book as that. But the plainest and cheapest Bible this morning used by any of you; the old family Bible, blistered here and there with the dropping tear of some hour of suffering, embrowned by frequent handling, its corners rounded with the wear of many years, and of more than one generation; its leaves often doubled down to mark some choice and blest passage that had dropped balm or shot out light upon the soul; or the Sunday scholar's Testament in which this morning's lesson was conned—a small volume as to size, a cheap volume as to cost—is worth more, intrinsically, in its spiritual contents, than the mere gold and gems of the copy which we have described ever could be, financially and commercially. The sale of the plates and jewels on which and with which that costly copy had been written would not bring an amount of value, that would be worthy to be compared with that which penitence and faith and prayer might get, out of the spiritual use of a Bible, though in the poorest paper and type and binding that have ever been seen by any of you.

1. This is to many of our neighbors the season of excursions. And here gold shows its conveniencies. You value wealth for its affording the means of travel. The rich man may choose and shift his home. He may visit the preferable climate at the fitting season. He may see the wonders of his own land, and visit the memorable monuments and ruins of the Old World. But the mere carrying about of the body does not give the highest good of travel. To attain that, the mind must be alert and prepared. You must know something of the history and languages of the strange countries visited. To profit aright, the mind must travel. And this leads us on to say, that there may be effective traveling of the mind, while the body is quiet in the old familiar home. Studying attentively the narrative of some intelligent and honest traveler, of enterprise and activity and ready observation, we may go far and learn much mentally while sitting under the old roof-tree of home, and without quitting the usual chair in its known place by the household hearth. Study devoutly your Bible, and you travel. You are carried back to share in the patriarchal wanderings and the apostolical journeys and voyages. You haunt the shores of that Mediterranean around which gathered so much of the whole history of the Old World, in its conquests, its traffic, its literature, and its idolatries. I lift the leaf of Scripture, and am within the curtains of Abraham's tent. I enter the closet where Daniel kneels; I stand by the pillow where Jacob dies; I am near him in Peniel as he wrestles, and God comes down to confer with his servant. Ay, the mind, by the helps thus



afforded, travels onward where no packet-line yet runs and whither modern railroads and telegraphs can not stretch their iron arms and send out their magnetic nerves. You travel back into the old eternity before creation, and on into the worlds of heaven and hell and the long, coming eternity beyond the judgment-day. I stand on the sea of glass; I see the gates of the New Jerusalem; I hear the wail of the burning pit. Bow the knee before God as you use your Bible. This telescope applied to the eye of faith, you see the land afar off, your heart is poured out at the feet of Jehovah, and the King of glory comes down and comes near to be your redeemer and sympathizer and friend. Christ presents Himself as your advocate and forerunner in the high and holy place. Your prayers ascend where the car of the aeronaut never soared, and bird's wing could not rise, nor human lungs find the needed vital air. The ladder of Jacob's dream witnesses yet, as of old, ascent and descent, the rising prayer and the descending boon, the filial appeal and the Fatherly response, between the paradise of God and your mourning spirit. This is traveling to the purpose! Is not such a book, bringing about such travel, better than thousands of gold and silver?

2. But you value wealth for its means of education, for the leisure it secures, and the teachers and libraries and helps towards the development of the mind, and the increase of your intellectual power, which it supplies to you. Ah! what book has done as much for the intellectual development of the masses of Scotland's rural peasantry, and of the old Puritan New-Englanders, as this same law of God's mouth? Burns' Cottager; the Dairyman's Daughter of the Isle of Wight; Legh Richmond's Young Cottager, how were they all intellectually schooled out of this one majestic lesson-book! Do you need using it no more because of the progress intellectually of the age? But what is all intellectual culture without moral training; without conversion from sin to holiness; without the new birth? Where shall we learn these, the details of the best, the indispensable education, but from God? You want training for heaven. Death is to be on you soon. Without holiness no man shall see God. Study this book to learn what holiness is, and how the Holy Spirit defines and imparts and perfects it. An education that shall fit you for the court of heaven, what earthly advantage can match this? Lavish treasures on the child of your affection; make him a scholar, thoroughly versed in the tongues and lore of many lands; and fully perfected in his own chosen walk of art and science. Render your daughter the delight of the home circle, and of every reünion that she enters; but what are all these when made a substitute for the grace of God? What is a culture without the Bible to a soul approaching, day by day, and confronting, perhaps to-morrow, eternity?

3. Gold and silver, even when ours, can not always be retained.



They do not necessarily give the owner discrimination—the skill to distinguish the bad investment from the good, the counterfeit coin, or bank note, from the genuine. By heeding the untrue, and accepting the unreal, a man may in a few years run through his thousands: and he who once walked the Exchange a man of mark, may die in the poor-house a pensioner on the town's alms. But the Bible surpasses all earthly wealth here again, for God's book is the great detector of all errors and counterfeits as to the spiritual world. It is like the charmed goblet of the old mediæval romance whose color changed, when poison, however secretly, was poured into it. They who study it become wise and wary to discern perilous and venomous error. Falsehood, however specious and popular, the current but baseless philosophies, and the honored but illusive principles, that may obtain in one age, can not long stand the sincere and prayerful application of the Scriptures as a test. "To the law and to the testimony!" cries God's prophet. In the use of them, the false loses its brilliancy, and the truth recovers its proper majesty. Now gold and silver can not do this for their owner. Instead of guarding him from loss and deception, they may subject their proprietor to special danger of these. But God's word is a treasure that helps take care of itself, and soon detects imposition. And here is another superiority of God's word above all earthly lucre.

4. But look again at the hours of sorrow, that must mark the way of all. Bereavement, calamity, disease, and death are the lot of all. The wealthiest can not by his gold deliver from the grave his own life or that of his brother, child, or friend. And when he sorrows for the loss which has made his earthly plans all futile, and left the world to him all dark, can counting gold soothe the pang? Many a man has slaved successfully to acquire opulence, but when the wealth came, it did not shut out sorrow, nor could it solace the pangs which it had failed to hinder.

But take the book of God; it does not banish, indeed, the approach of sorrow. But as to relieving it, see its consolations, its promises of divine sympathy; and the supports which it ministers in the hopes of reünion with our friends who have died in Christ. Look at its vindications of Divine Providence: and see its patterns of saintly and unrepining endurance. Look in on Job: and watch in the garden of Gethsemane one hour, while the cup is drained by your Redeemer, because the Father has appointed it. Hear its assurances, Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth. All things work together for good to them that love God. Could an overturned urn of pearls and topazes and diamonds poured out in our laps, buy from the bereaved and the saddened the excision from God's book of such rich promises as these? Thou hast holden me up, says the Psalmist. We need holding up. Let us go to the book of God where the Psalmist found help.

5. But wealth, you say, has great means of doing good. It may in the right hands be largely useful. We admit it. "But"—as you go on to say—"I am poor, and what hopes of usefulness are left to one so obscure, and with means so scanty?" Take up, my friend, that worn and blessed book. Ponder it, pray over it, live out its precepts and spirit; commend it gently, prudently, and consistently to those around you. The words of the wise are as goads to sinners, and, urged home by God's Spirit, they will be as nails fastened in a sure place, by the Master of assemblies. Let the Sunday-school teacher train his charge for both worlds. Let the mother make her child familiar with God's book, and, though like the mother of John Newton or Philip Doddridge, she leaves him to an early orphanage, she may see him at last and hail him as he comes up, leading a troop heavenward at his feet within the shining gates. I am childless, desolate, and destitute, says one. You can, if prayerful and pious, benefit most richly your benefactors. I bequeath, said a poor old woman in Britain—naming a pious benefactress, who had relieved often her needs, and who herself well knew the worth of prayer, and loved the book of God—I bequeath to Lady Elizabeth Hastings the 17th chapter of John. Would not that surviving friend always read this chapter, with new tenderness and added relish, as that recollection came back to her mind? This book did thus enable that poor, penniless pensioner to be useful to her wealthy and beneficent sister in Christ, and to lend new encouragements and impulses that coronets could not purchase or replace.

The Bible may make us more useful than wealth ever could. Paul and Paul's Master had neither money at interest nor landed estates that any lender in Jerusalem, Nazareth, or Tarsus would be likely to accept as security—perhaps for a loan of thirty pieces of silver. But did poverty hinder usefulness? Let the word of God dwell in you "richly in all wisdom." The poor in this world may be rich in faith, and like Paul, though poor themselves, make many rich with a wealth which death can not scatter, and which eternity shall only enhance.

6. But, says some anxious and loving parent—For myself I would not so much desire opulence; but then my children, I would fain make provision for, and without more gold and silver how can I do so? It is the duty (as God's natural laws have made it the delight) of parents to lay up for their children. But God's book in this respect, too, is better than all earthly riches. While wealth without right culture would only injure, right culture, even though without wealth, may secure to the child prosperity with the least accompanying amount of injury or danger. The pioneer mother, sending out her hardy son to the western wilderness knows that axe, rifle, and pocket-compass are better there as equipments, than the gold watch or broadcloth garment. The

costly is not always either the necessary or the safe equipment of the child. The book of God, duly placed in your child's hands, will be as the axe to hew down whole forests of error; the dial that times his steps on the highway to eternity; the compass that directs him in his path; the arm that frays or slays the beasts of prey, the vices or the temptations that would assail him. What the Spartan mother said to her son going into battle, as she gave him the shield, "This—or upon this!"—Bring this honorably back; or be brought on it, as upon a bier, a gallant corpse home: even it may the Christian parent more wisely say of this blessed book to each child. It is the shield of thy life, and it shall be the stay of thy death. "This, or upon this!" Rightly and prayerfully used it will carry thee through every snare, and conflict, and toil, and sorrow; and bring thee to the grave in peace and to the heaven of God forever. Wield it then in life—clasp it in death; truer than battle-blade, keener of edge, and surer in temper, and more terrible in its service against wrong than battle-axe, lance, or mace; richer and more full of compact resources than the heaviest scrip that traveller's shoulders ever bore; and better will it be to thee than title deeds or stock certificates. Use it as it directs; follow it and it will keep thee. Eye it, my son, and God will eye thee.

We have seen hurriedly in a comparison, which might have gone into many other details, that wealth is not equal to Scripture in its means of widest travel as afforded to its earnest students—in its education of its readers—in its preserving to us the treasures it has obtained for us—in its consolation of life's sorrows—in its supplying the largest means of usefulness to others—and in its provision especially for the household, and for those whom we leave behind us on quitting this world.

Do we, then, enough remember the true worth of the book of God in our homes and in our hands, and, above all, in our hearts? The Declaration of Independence is much quoted and lauded. The Scripture of God is worth it many myriads of times. Our laws and our liberties would soon go to wreck if this blessed volume be subverted or neglected.

But while the Bible rightly used is so incomparably excellent, the question befits us all, Do *we* rightly and regularly and devoutly use it? For if we fail to consult and obey it, its very possession will be an aggravation of our guilt, and work out for us more intense sorrow and remorse hereafter. If not taken as our guide along this valley of tears and up to yon mountain of rest and glory; if not our instructor in holiness, the jewel will be like a mill-stone round the neck, hurling us fathoms deep into the boiling, fiery surges of the pit. To join the guilty sinners of heathen lands, ourselves having come from a land of Bibles, will work wondering taunts in them and send keener remorse through

our own souls. Room, ye lost ones, from the lands of Moloch and Boodh and Juggernaut—room for the Sunday-school child—for the owner of a Bible never read—room for the weekly occupant of a seat in the sanctuary; for one who heard of Christ from childhood, but never believed, and who, over Bible, and over Sabbaths, and over ordinances, clambered his hard and obstinate way into Tophet.

Do I love and strive to obey the Bible? Yet I need to understand it better and to prize it far more adequately. If the prodigal had been called home by a letter from the father's own hand, laid in the palm of the poor outcast on the very day of his hungry envying of the swine at their husks, would he not, even in the plenty of his recovered home, have valued that welcome and gracious epistle? This book is your Father's letter of recall and adoption to you. There are the very outgushings of his parental heart all over it. It has the dripping blood shed by your Elder Brother in bringing it, and in reaching and reclaiming your soul—in ruddy blotches yet hot upon its blessed leaves. By the love of that Redeemer, and the blood of his redemption; by the sins which this Bible only shows the way to pardon and subdue, and by the sorrows which it only can soothe; by the love that it witnesses on God the Father's part, and by the hope that it warrants on man's part as the child of that Father's adoption; by the name of that Holy Spirit, who only could indite it, and who is needed to interpret it; by the influence, unspent and incalculable, that it has shed over the mart, the field, the home, and the highway—over the bench and the bar, and the legislation and the liberties of the nation; by its lessons for the cradle, the school, the death-bed, and the cemetery; by its origin in heaven; by its history on earth; by the memory of its writers and martyrs and converts; by the dread of its being remembered in hell as a neglected book; by the glory of its being remembered in heaven as a book never failing, now verified in the experience of the blessed and glorified, and in their vision of the holy One; by all that can awe or win, attract or daunt, I charge it upon myself—and I would charge it upon your souls, to value this book of the law of God's mouth, setting it where it deserves to be rated above all the thousands of gold and silver.

And what the shame and the woe of foregoing such treasures of bliss and light, and of consenting by our unbelief to have our names blotted out of every promise and put into every curse of Scripture? The stoutest heart may well shudder at the vast ruin denounced upon those who are to be blotted out of the Book of life. Why choose that tremendous recoil of the Gospel, as its only permanent result for us? Why work out the disinheritance and damnation of our own souls?

## SERMON VI.

BY THE REV. A. L. STONE,

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### WORKING POWER.\*

"I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong."—1 JOHN 2 : 14.

I LIKE the teaching of an elder philosopher, defining *Power* to be that in a cause by which it produces its effect. According to this definition that is the true idea of Power which makes it productive and efficient in its sphere, and for its ends. This view of Power sets it forth as a working energy, an actual going over of the cause to secure its appropriate result. So that we may almost say, it is not Power except in a passive sense when it ceases to work. Lay it by silent and idle, and it has disappeared from our recognition and calculation. Power in possession, but not in exertion, is practically as weak as its opposite. What is it, if it do not act? It is, for the ends delayed and defeated, as if it could not act. How empty were the boast: "I am strong, though passive; I could, if I would!" There is no demonstration of *having*, without the *using*.

Of course the right tenure of all beneficent power is its *use*. To be strong but inactive, strong for good, but to do nothing, nothing that blesses, is to be both weak and wicked. What's the advantage of having a force never harnessed to the weight it was made to draw? Where's the power? And who before God can answer for the possession of faculties and influences never exerted for God's glory or human welfare? The question then to be raised when we come upon any endowment of strength, especially as connected with human responsibility, is this—Is it a *live* force, in action, thus a real power, and not a passivity? Does it work according to its nature and relations? Is it truly a power by the demonstration that it is productive for the ends unto which in God's plan it had respect?

It is a grave inquiry for a young man to set out upon, where-withal he shall cleanse his own way.

It is well that our discourses as Christian pastors to the youth of our congregations and our cities, should lift up voices of warning, declare plainly and faithfully the dangers that beset inexperienced feet, uncover each ambush of hidden evil, unmask each wily tempter coming in friendly guise, strip gilded and painted vice to the skeleton of death and corruption underneath, recite the tragic histories of brave hopes and high ambitions, these proud argosies that leave port with such stately promise, deep-freighted

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with personal riches and household love and pride, wrecked ere the mid-voyage, and all this golden wealth sucked into the remorseless gulf that has swallowed up aforetime such untold treasure, and thus help each imperiled youth, so put on guard, to deliver his own feet, and save his own soul alive.

But when this matter is in healthful process, there is another and a much higher question for every young man to ask. It does not terminate upon himself. It consults not alone his safety. It respects not simply his personal deliverance. The soul that has no broader range for its solicitude than that bounded by the horizon of self-interest, that makes it the sum of its religion to ask, "How may *I* escape, how may *I* make *my* way prosperous, how may *I* have good success?" has never come into sympathy with Christ, has not yet opened his eyes upon the scope of a true life, and, what is more to him, shall miserably fail of all for which he is so concerned. Beforehand the pen of inspiration has graven his epitaph, "*Whosoever will save his life, shall lose it.*" The way to save life is to give it up for the sake of Christ and his gospel. This grander question, that includes the personal, and provides for self by the sacrifice of self, respects not our safety, but our usefulness; not our enriching, but our imparting; not our laying up, but our expending. It asks not, *How may I reserve*, but *how may I employ my strength?* How may I do the most for God and man? How may I take hold of my age, and make my generation feel me?

Suffer me, then, companions and friends, to divert your eye and thought from all issues that concern no matter what form of self-advantage, and to propose to you these questions, as channels for your soul's ardor, the true life-problems to be wrestled with, "What is personal power in this age?" and "How may it be laid out for the good of the age and the honor of Christ?"

We take up these questions in their order. "What is personal power in this age?"

The world's idea of power has changed, and changed many times. Earth has had its barbaric age and its barbaric ideas, and renews both in some degree, in the youth of each individual life. History, fiction, and poetry, literature and art, in their various forms have expressed these ideas, and themselves remain as chronicles and monuments of these changes. And each individual life again has its season of being bewitched with the barbaric ideal of heroism and manhood, and the literature that sets it forth. And then both the literature and the life pass the succeeding stages of the world's progress, the record and the passion, though with by no means equal footstep and perfect sympathy. Some minds never get beyond barbaric tastes, and read, and dream, and linger like idle schoolboys in Time's "*first lessons*" always.

1. The earliest type of personal power is the *physical*. The first heroes were Nimrods, mighty hunters in the chase and the



battle. They were swift of foot, they were stalwart of frame, they were long and strong of arm, and tireless in hazardous deeds. They were deep-chested, thin-flanked, bold-breasted, and made up of all the approved points of personal knighthood. They were cool and dauntless of eye, and advanced upon danger with a confidence in the prowess of their own good right arm, against whatsoever odds. Their foes were wild beasts in the forests or the amphitheatre, or redoubtable champions on the plains and in the passes of heady fights, or fierce castled robbers, brutal and strong, whose fortresses they scaled, whose brigand heads they hung out over the castle walls. So they pass before us along the scenery of their times, men not of words but of deeds, grim specters, blood-stained, the peerage of human muscles, and the best was he who rode the boldest steed, who leveled the stoutest lance, who whirled the heaviest mace, who struck with deepest dint. They loom up in the mists of old romance, man and horse, blended, centaur-like, sheathed in iron, carrying in their single puissance the fortunes of kingdoms and dynasties. To them the lyre was struck, of them the minstrel sung, for them the feast smoked, on them beauty smiled.

The elder Hercules was one who could rend oaks and strangle serpents. The modern has other labors, only symbolized by those of his prototype.

We shall never quite be able to suppress our admiration for physical prowess, and yet this sort of hero has had his day. Many things have combined to push him off the stage. The world, in its various progress, has out-grown him, and left him behind with its own boyhood. Changing sentiments have depreciated this gladiatorial and Roman *virtue*, and the invention of a small, black, nitrous dust has swept the knights and their train out of human story.

Personal greatness is no longer a question of thews and sinews. To be strong now, is not to excel in bone and brawn.

2. The next type of personal power is that derived from *birth, and blood, and place* — patrician greatness. This sort of hero drives across the stage charioted, coroneted, and titled. He bears a name made illustrious by dead men who lie in state. He dwells amid his armed retainers and receives feudal homage. His lordly castle overlooks his subject lands and the homes of his peasantry. He rides with so many spears at his back, and when he goes to court, men give him precedence and consideration not according as he is gentle in spirit, true in heart, noble in purpose, and pure in life, but according to the length of his buried line, and the number of the stars blazoned on his breast. When he stands among his peers, he is "*primus inter pares*" or *ultimus*, first or last in his caste by descent and rank, rather than by worth. We still cherish some little portion of this feudal deference, and make way with decent homage for the well-born. But this greatness is in our

day only a shadowy effigy of its once ducal preëminence. The time has past, at least with us on these republican shores, when men wield large influence solely because they stand high on a heap of ancestral bones,<sup>6</sup> or enter the social scale on the loftiest level. Not the crown, but what it circles is the question; not the emblazoned star, but what beats beneath it; not the fountain, but the redness of the blood that flows in the veins.

3. Next arose in history the type of personal power derived from wealth. Forays, tournaments, and crusades had their charges. They stimulated, too, in a rude age, both art and trade. The humble tradesman, the plebeian artisan, the men that pushed the ventures and pocketed the gains of early commerce and rudimental manufactures, found themselves able to supply the wants of needy nobles and impoverished princes. They began to be sought and courted. Their industry and sagacity built fleets, paid and provisioned armies, and replenished the coffers of state. They became men of mark and weight, without whose consent kings could not go to war, or even reign at home. This middle class, between the serf and the chieftain, emerged thus out of obscurity, and pushed their way up into recognition and importance, holding in their leathern purses the control of cabinets and the policies of ambition. This interest has steadily advanced. With the multiplying wants of civilization, with geographical research and colonial enterprise, with international leagues and exchanges, this far-thoughted trade, this world-wide commerce has come to be a mightier puissance in the earth than all personal ambition, all national pride. Any great disturbance of this interest goes deeper than the shocks of war, outflies the march of the swift pestilence, deranges the machinery of every government, and the comfort of every home, the thrift of every son of toil. The peers of this new order of nobility are men of redoubtable force. Throned on their money-bags they hold a scepter unto whose lifting and poisoning a multitude of dependencies bend the knee. Of course in their personal and individual sphere they carry about with them something of the atmosphere of this wide and potent influence. They move with the tread of solid men. Their going out and coming in carries a presence with it. Their forms and faces, and even their words are overlaid with gold-leaf. Their quarter is the court end. Their circle is good society. Their way of doing things is fashion.

And yet let one of these gilded peers be a narrow-souled miser, how like a great blot lie his mansion and surroundings on the smiling landscape; how men shiver as they hurry past him, out of the cold shadow into the sunshine! Let him be a mean man, how every body in his heart despises him, even those that fawn. Let him be a sharp, hard man, and what lowering looks follow him behind his back! Let him win and spend selfishly, how few bless him, or are wrought upon by him with any depth

of impression! Let him be without personal characteristics, mere impersonal, incarnate wealth, how fleeting the reign of his influence, how low the interests he has touched and shaped! In the best of his power this man deals so primarily and largely with material and perishable investments, that as a mere man of wealth the secret of farthest, most lasting, most vital influence is not his.

4. A yet loftier type of personal power than any we have named is the Intellectual. As the soul is the true man, intellectual stature is real stature. When man comes in contact with man, and strength is measured against strength, intellectual preëminence, more than all other advantages yet signalized, is real preëminence. The force of this power is far felt and permanent. Its monuments are stately and enduring. A word, a thought, pass out over the nations, and wing their flight down the ages. They become seeds of thought, and conditions and stimulants of mental activity to millions of minds and many generations. They have the keys of all souls in their keeping, and open, and enter in, and sit down with the air and the welcome of a master. They live as watchwords and rallying cries on men's lips in personal sorrows and great struggles. In them lives the life of their author. His works are not his mausoleum, but his incarnation, in which he still walks and talks among his fellows and his disciples, and shall never see death. Still he sings in immortal verse, still his theses teach in the schools of philosophy, still he stands before nature's secret altars, her high priest to all worshippers. Still he sways with burning periods the popular assembly, decrees judicial decisions, guides statesmanship and diplomacy, charms our evening hours with sweet fancies, or guides us along the mighty galleries of history, and watches through midnight vigils, with the lone student, beguiled by such companionship till the gray dawn smites his eyelids and pales his faithful lamp.

It *is* a crown to fire the eye of ambition. It *is* a height to tempt adventurous feet.

But this power in its distinctive inheritance, as a lordship among men, is for the few. It can not be universal. Its conditions are too exacting. It demands a life of devotion to itself. It asks for the young fresh years and the full strength. Minerva is a jealous divinity. She will not divide the homage of her votaries with a rival. Intellectual pursuits, in such measure as to confer intellectual command, can not be joined to the common everyday toils of life by which men win their daily bread. The teachers, the intellectual quickeners of their age in every department of mind must be mainly single and professional in their calling. Therefore if preëminence here be a lofty style of personal power, it is confined to its clanships; it is not popular, not a boon for the masses. It is a crown like the light of setting suns for the tall peaks, leaving the lower slopes and the vales in the shade.

And then as mere intellectual force, until it is veined with an-

other life, it expends itself upon the intellect, or at farthest upon the sensibility. It works beneath a cold sky. If it comes into the warm region of the sensibilities, it does not go down to the vitalities of character and breathe through all the channels of the heart the spirit of the daily life. It is not even a power to soothe and bless its possessor. Its fruit turns to ashes on the lips, and many a disappointed aspirant for intellectual greatness confesses at the last, in bitterness of spirit,

"The tree of knowledge is not that of life."

Let us search again for yet another type of personal power subject to none of these conditions, while yet it shall gather to itself the best life and meaning of all that have preceded.

5. We must call this truer and better kind, *Moral Power*. Its seat is the moral nature, the conscience, and the heart. Its life is the central law prescribed by the supreme moral Governor—the law of his own being—the force that sways Omnipotence—the law, the force of love. It is ever obedient to the right; because it is love. For right is some being's due, and love can not withhold any thing that is due to God or man. For the same reason it is just. It is unselfish. It goes forth in beneficence whenever and wherever it may, as a full fountain flows down, give it open channels.

There arise thus at once innumerable expressions of this law as soon as it takes possession of the heart. This life pulses out in myriad actions. It asserts principles, and maintains allegiance to them. It builds up codes, and claims for them universal sovereignty. It denounces wrong, and thunders against it, and points to the darker thunders about the throne where the Supreme Love sits. It lifts up moral standards. It pushes them out along all the plains of character, plants them over against all human systems, moves them into contact with every life. It seeks to erect thus on all human consciences, with its accredited decisions as statutes, a universal tribunal, that shall try whatsoever thing on earth that has the quality of moral in it. Its judgments become pervading convictions, public sentiment; and from them, as rectified by an enlightened conscience, there lies no appeal, for the voice of the final Judge has already spoken in such decrees. He who contends against it can scarce avoid the conviction, that he is at warfare with God himself. This vocal truth, and right, and love, is the voice of the *highest*, and every accent is toned with that glorious majesty, against which none hath hardened himself and prospered. The feeblest human lips may utter the testimony, but it lifts the startled thought at once to the Infinite, and clothes itself with the attributes of Omnipotence and Sovereignty. The scope of this moral power comes into view thus at a glance. It is a life in the individual heart. It is a law for earth and time and man and all being.

More and more is this kind of power a puissance on earth. It is recognized; it is relied upon; it is obeyed. It assumes kingli-

ness year by year, and stretches far an imperial scepter. It was of this that our greatest orator and statesman spoke when his heart surged up its deep tides against the insolent tyranny of the Czar: "Gentlemen, there is something on earth greater than arbitrary and despotic power. The lightning has its power, and the whirlwind has its power, and the earthquake has its power; but there is something among men more capable of shaking despotic thrones than lightning, whirlwind, or earthquake, and that is the excited and aroused indignation of the whole civilized world."

This indignant protest of humanity is the protest of a universal conscience in sympathy with eternal justice and right—other names only for eternal love. This over-awing power, which touches nothing that is material, wields no visible weaponry, and yet is stronger than any or all the might of nature—is MORAL, the power of truth, the power of love—that love glowing in the human heart—that truth believed and echoed from the human lips.

This is the power that more and more asserts supremacy in our day. He who takes strongest hold of his age, must work by this. His connection with human interests and human destinies must be, for his most controlling influence, not a superiority in height of stature, in height of place, in weight of purse, in breadth of intellect, but a moral connection—a taking hold of the elements of this new and latest royalty. This inheritance, too, is universal. It is not restricted to a favored few. The humblest mind, the lowliest place may wield this preëminent force. Any heart that can hold and use the truth—that can make right sacred, and regnant to itself—that can feel the glow and shed the light and warmth of love, shares this wide royalty, becomes a partner in this controlling supremacy.

All that was good and vital in other and outlawed types of personal force is restored and immortalized in this. The intellect may be wedded to it. Great thoughts are like crested waves on this mightier tide. Herein is the clearest mental illumination. Love is light. God is the father of light, and God is love.

Here, too, the solid golden ingots, the silver bars molten in this crucible of love, pour out their shining streams in nimblest and farthest currency, and dust that perishes is transmuted into polished gems that burn as the stars forever and ever.

Here there gathers also upon the heart the inspiration of that peerless nobility, that ancestry celestial and divine, whose crest is the brooding dove, whose motto is, "Born of God."

And here comes back, to light the eye, and fire the heart, and kindle heroic ardors of enthusiasm, all that was generous, chivalrous, and self devoted in the day and story of knighthood.

This then is the point at which to ask our second question, How, as individuals, we may possess this moral power, find ourselves clothed with it as a personal force, and by it lay hold of and bless our age?

1. The heart itself must be the home and court of this power. The individual heart must yield itself to the control of this truth; come loyally under the monarchy of this right, and pulse in every throb with this arterial love. It must set up for itself this *law of love*. It must obey before it can reign. There will be no such personal power with the shallow and hollow pretense of allegiance to it. All must be solid sincerity in one's own spirit. The truth must pour its light through all these inner chambers, searching and illumining. The will must turn to the right, as the needle to the steady pole. Love must take her place, gentle and crowned queen of the soul. This mind must go over from self to love. (God is love.) The will must be conformed to the divine will, and fasten itself upon the great ends that august Will embraces—the public good, the holiness and happiness of all being.

This renovation of the heart is indispensable to the genuine possession and highest exercise of this moral power. Selfishness can not attain to it. Personal ambition is, and always will be, shorn of this strength. When the aim and the labor terminate upon self, the hands are weak to grasp and bless the age. This selfish cupidity may work evil enough, but can not by any possibility be leagued with a lasting beneficent personal influence. This man shall live and die, and his name shall perish. Neither in life shall his generation thank him, nor after death shall other generations seek his grave, to weep over him as a benefactor gone. Self must be slain. No more must the knee bend to it, the hands toil for it, the heart sorrow or rejoice as it suffers or prospers. This condition is imperative. Seek power, seek influence, seek a sphere, seek a hold upon men for self, and this wide and permanent sway shall be denied. The new, regenerate life must kindle upon the heart—God's life in the human soul—and then, and not till then, this vital and enduring power will begin to stream forth like rays from a lighted lamp at night.

2. There must be personal purity and integrity in action. The law of unselfish living, enthroned in the heart, must extend its dominion over the life. The character in those developments that meet men's eyes, must be fair and spotless. The man must be seen walking with his conscience at his left hand, the Bible at his right, and God before him. No mean thing, no dishonest thing, no unclean thing, no false thing, no piece of selfish trickery, no intrigue for personal advantage, no subterranean, dark practice of undermining another's foundations—nothing of all those arts and policies that self thinks fair play in a world of selfish competitions, rivalries, plots and counter-plots, must argue the supremacy of that odious idolatry in this bosom. For this personal hold upon the age, *character* is indispensable.

Ah! how slowly is built up a good character! The deep foundations are out of sight, and rise broad and massive without observation. Then, stone by stone, the rising walls grow visible



and tall. Day by day builds itself in. Act by act—each act of life is built in. Those that are private and personal—the domestic, the social, the facts and spirit of a business career, public and official acts—all join, stone above stone, timber upon timber. Slowly it rises by careful and painstaking masonry. One rotten piece of timber will bring the whole fabric down a wreck. It must be well built—this citadel of personal power.

3. The ascendant law of unselfish devotion to the good of beings must assert itself, also to be puissant, in forms of self-denial—a cutting off of self-indulgencies, a careful personal abstinence from all that may be harmful to our fellows. The world is keen-eyed in this matter. It may insist upon the harmlessness of its pursuits and pleasures, the righteousness of its ways; resent interference and question; bestow ovations upon those that plead for the healthfulness and soundness of all its moral putrefactions, but, inconsistently enough with its creeds—quite consistently with the facts of a moral nature, it can not canonize such cozening flatteries; it can not consent that the moral teachers, whom it is to revere, and to whom its conscience shall bow, shall indorse its rule of morals. It knows better. It laughs inwardly a mocking and derisive laugh over the baptized philosophies that erect its follies, fashions, and corruptions into a religion. Go with the world to lead the world, put yourself at their head, in their own chosen paths, and their wanton and scornful feet will run over and tread you down in the mire of contempt and forgetfulness. Stand aloof, high and pure, *deny self*; the world can understand this as well as the other, and will yield it the homage of a conscience which it can not altogether pervert, and concede to it and you an influence and power which it can not choose but feel.

4. Again, this power grows and becomes effective by being employed. It must declare itself in action. It must not content itself with idly saying, I am, I exist, I am right-principled, I have divine energy within me. It will stifle itself and die out under such conditions. Nay, it attests its own hollowness by inactivity. Nothing is so restless in self-assertion as love. It has spoken, but it must speak again. It has brought in a tribute, but it must seek another. It has done, but it must keep doing. Caress follows upon caress, gift upon gift, tenderness upon tenderness, like waves of the sea. He who would possess more of this personal force, who would find it accumulating upon him, must use it—use all he has; use it with an economy that shall leave nothing of it unproductive and waste. He who loves, will do what love prompts, and what love can.

5. As to the particular ways in which this personal force will attach itself to human interests and live in their histories, we may say, the circumstances and opportunities of every man alone can give the definite and detailed answer. But these ways are all the ways possible to the man. They lead from every open door of

occasion; they fling wide their gateway with all necessity that will suffer our intervention. It is love flowing every where, like flowing waters. Set a stream in motion from a perennial fountain. On course the rills, dividing themselves and multiplying themselves as the flutings of the vale open channel ways. Every depression is filled up with crystal pools; each old furrow scarred into the ground, becomes a running brook; the hollows spread out in miniature lakes; and still the music laughs and gurgles along, flowing every where it may. And greenness margins every trickling silver line; and flowers in bud and in bloom, nod to the new creating power, and shed the fragrance of their gratitude on the air; and where it only insinuates itself drop by drop—an ooze, and not a flowing—the grasses lift up their reviving stems, and confess the secret benefaction. So will this moral power work as a personal force, if it be indeed the restless longing energy of love. Show it a good to be done—that is constraint enough for its activity. It will be love every where. It will stoop to a fallen child and set him on his feet, and wipe away his tears. It will tell a stranger his way; it will move to make room for one standing; it will give a gentle answer to the question of ignorance. From the prayer of the needy it will not turn away. It will share its last crust with the hungry. It will give a smile to wistful eyes. It will speak a kind word to the dejected and desolate. It will put its hand to every burden too heavy for the bearer to carry alone.

It will be especially eager and busy in affording the relief that goes deeper than the outward need. It will warn the heedless. It will strengthen the tempted. It will succor the beset. It will confirm the wavering. It will reinforce the timid and yielding. It will lay a grasp upon the reckless, and cast itself in the path of the desperate. It will watch for its comrades, and make all a brother's care its own. Delicately, thoughtfully, prayerfully, it will set itself to be its brother's keeper. It will join him in his solitude; it will open its pleasant refuges to him in his home-sickness; it will dissuade him from vice and error; it will draw him by a personal magnetism into paths of sobriety, purity, and virtue; it will gird him around with bands of loving constraint, as with angel guardians.

It will not content itself with improving opportunities. It will create opportunities. It will make itself a sphere. It will go forth into the vineyard, to see what needs to be done, and ask the master for employment. It will search out the parentless, the sadder than orphans, the babes of the chill attic, the damp cellar, and the noisome gutter, and bring them, young, forlorn, straying lambs to the good Shepherd's arms. It will open "ragged schools," and convert the title into a misnomer to all eyes that look in upon the decent and cleanly order within doors. It will organize bands for spreading a table and lighting the hearth-

stone within honest poverty's humble walls. It will lift the fallen in the gentleness of a great pity, like His whose sacred feet the Magdalen kissed unrebuked. It will bear the leaves of healing, full-handed, and scatter them like snow-flakes along all the thoroughfares. It will usher the book of books, a lamp of solar brightness into dark homes. It will bend with its spiritual kindred around the altars of social prayer. It will take its place in the front rank of the sacramental host; ask to be excused from none of its campaigns; never wearying of the march, the watch, or the conflict. It will hallow the day that stands among the days of time, God's symbol of sovereignty and majesty, like the test tree of Eden. In one word, it will honor the apostolic ideal of Christian living: "Steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord." So will it be real power, moral power—productive, efficient, fruitful, tireless, and constant in its degree as a law of nature, as the uncreated Love.

Can any man inaugurate for himself such a life and history, and pour himself out upon it as the normal habitude of his soul, and not be felt? Can such a life fail to take hold of the age? Can this power work, and not tell controllingly and abidingly upon individual interests and issues—the making and shaping of character, and the advancement of that unseen kingdom, whose stately marches, though all silent and soundless, are the real thread of time's eventful chronicle? Nay, indeed. This is true personal force. This is the way to build ourselves into the age, and the great purposes and final successes of Jehovah of hosts.

This style of living can not long be obscure, even to human eyes. A halo begins soon to surround this man's head. His presence reproves vice and hypocrisy and aimlessness. His breath quickens all languid souls. His strength helps all that are weary and overborne. Men begin to look up to him, to depend upon him, to count upon his definite influence. He is a depository of celestial help for every good work and every harassed spirit. He is a pillar of hope in all the high places of the field. God and man build upon him as an approved corner-stone; the Church builds upon him; the world builds upon him; Christianity and its Author build upon him; his age confesses in this, his life-long labor of love, one of the great and permanent forces of that generation; and when God's record spreads out its scroll for studious eyes in yonder world, his renown will be high with heaven's plumed peerage.

Companions and friends, members of the Association, this is your way to move and bless your times; this is the personal force with which to take deepest and strongest hold of your age. You will add to it auxiliary nerves of which I have not spoken. The ardor of youth will glow with this central fire of love. The quick, warm, passionate sympathies of young men will pervade this living force. The smile of youth will sit on your face with the light

of this celestial irradiation; the grasp of youth's fresh palm, the hopefulness of youth's bold, untamed spirit, the adventurous, enterprising heroism of youthful courage, the might of impulses, that older and soberer strength has dropped, and that go so far beyond all that is possible to mere strength, the genial, winning, magnetic power of this fresh, glad, buoyant spirit, are priceless aids, with you, to perfecting the invincibility of this your heritage of personal strength.

Here, then, lies the path of your true ambition. All other is ignoble, unworthy, and beside being forbidden, is utterly vain, as sure to defeat itself. Not that perhaps you may not win, if you strike for other immediate objects—but in the winning, will settle down upon your heart a great and incurable disappointment. You have won; you hold fast the prize—it is emptiness, ashes. You have mixed the cup with what elements you would, sought far and dearly bought. It sparkles to your lip, and is even as you drink bitterness and death. Awake to this better, holier ambition. You can not fail of the prize, nor will the prize fail to satisfy you.

May I be to you the voice of the new-born year? The old year, as it parted from you, had for you, perhaps, reproaches. You remember how sad-toned their accents, and how they sank into your heart like lead. This just-arrived messenger from the throne, that is to take you by the hand and lead you through all her changeful round, comes to you with unwrinkled mien, with eyes beaming like twin stars of hope, with a fair, unwritten scroll, for the yet unacted history of the months she calls her own, and she points forward and asks you to-night, with kindling cheek and quickened breath, what you will have this future, what shall be traced on her white scroll.

She singles out the strength of youth—and, gazing upon the yet undimmed eye, the elastic tread, the lithe, sinewy vigor of body and mind, she lays her summons upon you in God's name. "*Oh! work!*" she says, "work for your kind; work for your age; work for souls; work for God; work unselfishly. Let go the earthly prizes—all of them; strike for the spiritual good of men; count all things but loss for this grander prize; give life itself for it; and I will crown you with garlands of peace. The memorials of your age will crown you with eternal fame, and Christ will crown you kings and priests unto God forever."

What shall be your response?

A few more of these quick returning annual salutations, and we shall meet where the results of our earthly labor will fully appear. They that have toiled for wealth, for pleasure, for place, for honor, for any form of self, will be there with the fruit of all their devices. They that have thrown their strength into this labor of love, will there see, as no language can now set it forth, the immeasurably higher wisdom of their choice, the glorious harvest waiting upon their earthly work.